GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1741
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2014
AMENDMENT OF NFSA
Rajesh Shri M. B.

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to amend the present National Food Security Act (NFSA) to enhance the per family entitlement of foodgrains and other items and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government proposes to supply more essential commodities apart from foodgrains through PDS at controlled prices and if so, the details thereof;

(c) the other steps proposed to be taken to improve the Public Distribution System (PDS) in remote and tribal areas to ensure easy access to foodgrains for the tribal people and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Government proposes to set up more procurement centres in the States to increase procurement for PDS/NFSA and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB PATIL DANVE)

(a): No Madam, there is no proposal to amend the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) at present.

(b): There is no proposal under consideration to supply commodities other than foodgrains through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). However, States/Union Territories (UTs) Governments have been encouraged to enlarge the basket of commodities by adding non-PDS items for sale through Fair Price Shops (FPSs). Some States/UTs have reported distribution of items like pulses, edible oils, iodized salt, spices etc. through FPSs.

The NFSA also contains measures for reforms in TPDS, to be undertaken progressively by the Central and State Governments, which inter alia include diversification of commodities distributed under the PDS over a period of time.

(c): Government has notified the Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001, which mandates the State/UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS in States/UTs including in the remote and tribal areas. Further, under guidelines issued by the Department, States/UTs have been requested to ensure that no consumer /card holder has to travel more than 3 kms to reach his FPS. In areas which cannot be covered by static fair price shops, mobile vans may be introduced to cover the consumers residing in hilly remote, far-flung, desert, tribal and inaccessible areas. The guidelines include provision of sales centre at weekly haats to provide essential commodities at fixed prices in some rural areas, particularly in the tribal areas, which will be a great boon to consumers of these areas.

The NFSA also contains a provision that the Central Government and the State Governments shall, while implementing the provisions of the Act and the schemes for meeting specified entitlements, give special focus to the needs of the vulnerable groups especially in remote areas and other areas which are difficult to access, hilly and tribal areas for ensuring their food security.

(d): Before the start of every marketing season, Government convenes a meeting of State Food Secretaries, Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other stake holders to prepare a detailed action plan for making the arrangements of procurement in the ensuing marketing season. Details of number of procurement centres and arrangements like purchase material, storage space etc. are discussed in the meeting. Review is also made from time to time on the need of additional procurement centres, if any and depending upon the requirement, additional centres are opened.